

Dollars and Sense

An Open Letter To Sen. Morse by Victor Perlo

Hon. Wayne Morse
Senate Office Building Washington, D. C.
Dear Senator Morse:

You are performing a public service in trying to dig out some of the roots of our government's tragic policy towards Cuba, and in opposing worse excesses.

Congressional investigation has concentrated so far on analyzing mistakes made in intervention against Cuba, instead of uncovering the forces behind the fundamental mistake of a hostile, interventionist policy towards Cuba.

May I suggest the desirability of exploring the financial forces which, as Premier Nehru noted, were very much involved in this matter. Rarely has there been such a concentration of individuals directly involved in a major government decision who have personal stakes — running into six and seven figures — in that decision.

Anti-Castro policies in Washington became critically intense after the land reform nationalized the properties of American sugar companies. These controlled two-fifths of Cuba's sugar, and one-tenth of Cuba's total land area.

Allen Dulles' role is well known. His law firm represents the Czarnikow-Rionda sugar companies — Manati and Francisco, — the second largest U. S. owned grouping in Cuba. Sullivan and Cromwell partner Alfred Jaretzki, Jr., sits on the boards of these companies, along with Standard Oil heir Samuel R. Milbank. Was Dulles' intelligence estimate colored by his private interest?

The new Export-Import Bank Chairman, Harold Linder, wants it to "be more intimately linked with foreign policy". A Wall Streeter who served on the CIA Board of Estimates for Dulles, Linder was a director of Compania Azucarera Atlantica del Golfo, the very largest U. S. holding. He was a partner of Carl M. Loeb, Rhoades & Co., which controls that company. What foreign policy has Mr. Linder recommended on Cuba? Was he consulted on the invasion?

And what about Laurence A. Crosby, for 20 years president of Mr. Linder's sugar company, who got into the sugar business during a long partnership in Sullivan and Cromwell? Unlike the Republican Dulles brothers, Crosby, like Linder, is a long-time leading contributor to the Democrats. This usually obtains entree into top places. Did Crosby drop in from his Washington office at 801 19th St. to visit Mr. Kennedy? What policy did he advise?



The major role of A. A. Berle, Jr., the President's Coordinator of Latin American Affairs, and his strong anti-Castro attitude, have been reported in the press. Berle was Chairman of the American Molasses Co., and trustee of 10% of its stock. American Molasses owned no properties in Cuba; but its profits have declined since the revolution upset the favorable terms on which it obtained raw materials from private companies in Cuba. Mr. Berle invented the concept of the "corporate soul". Where was American Molasses' "soul" when it came to bombing Cuban department stores and burning Cuban sugar fields?

The Commerce Department has much to do with decisions on the embargo on trade with Cuba, which has already added tens of thousands to the ranks of the unemployed in the United States, and, if its threatened extension is carried out, may end the jobs of the Tampa cigar makers. Commerce Undersecretary Edward Gudeman was a partner in Lthman Brothers, which controls the fourth largest former U. S. sugar property in Cuba, Verientes-Camaguey. Is Mr. Gudeman consulted on trade relations with Cuba? What does he recommend?

Of all the Republican chieftains consulted by Mr. Kennedy, Governor Rockefeller gave the most fulsome support to a policy of maximum, and reckless, hostility towards Cuba. The Rockefeller family owns a controlling interest in Punta Alegre, seventh largest of the former U. S.-owned Cuban sugar companies, besides other sugar properties in Cuba and elsewhere. David Rockefeller, the Governor's brother, and Chairman of the family's Chase Manhattan Bank, was on the board of directors of Punta Alegre. He retired a few months ago, perhaps for diplomatic reasons, but left two veteran Chase Bank men to handle things. Punta Alegre stock doubled in price in the months immediately preceding the invasion.

There are other examples, concerning sugar and other U. S. properties in Cuba. But those noted above suffice for the present.

The interests of officials and advisors involved in our government's Cuban policy interlock. Chase Manhattan is banker for Linder's and Berle's companies. Sullivan and Cromwell is attorney for Standard Oil. Mr. Berle conducted a major research study for Mr. Rockefeller.

Is there a coordinated anti-Cuban cabal setting government policy on a ruinous course for selfish reasons?